

Contact: Tom Cook 406-444-1645 Release: Receipt

## STATE STUDENTS GETTING NEW MONTANA HISTORY BOOK

The Montana Historical Society, the Indian Education Division of the Office of Public Instruction, the Montana History Foundation, tribal leaders from across the state and other educators have teamed up to produce a new Montana history book that is hitting schools across the state this fall.

“Montana: Stories of the Land,” by Krys Holmes, looks back at more than 12,000 years of known human history to offer a panoramic view of Montana’s fascinating history.

The book is published by the Montana Historical Society, and it is the first time that all of the vast resources of the Society were used to tell the Montana story.

State Superintendent Linda McCulloch said the book is important because it is the first Montana history that includes Native American input and perspectives along with the history of those that came after them.

“The content is engaging, the pictures are vibrant, and most importantly, it includes Montana’s rich American Indian history in almost every chapter,” McCulloch said.

The Montana History Foundation raised the bulk of the money to publish the book and to distribute 5,000 copies free of charge to schools across the state.

“It has been such a pleasure to donate and raise funds for the Society textbook project. This is a project the Montana History Foundation got behind right away because it honors our past and celebrates our future while imparting that knowledge to the next generation,” Foundation Board President Matthew Cohn said.

Generous donations for the project also came from the Bair Trust, the Donnelley Foundation, the Charlotte and Edward K. Wheeler Foundation, the Steele-Reese Foundation, the Indian Education Division of OPI, the Dennis and Phyllis Washington Foundation, and PPL Montana.

Famed Montana and Society historian Dave Walter, who died in 2006, conceived of the project and hired writer Krys Holmes and teacher consultant Susan C. Dailey to craft the manuscript. Martha Kohl of the Society assumed responsibility for project management after Walter's death.

“Unlike most Montana history surveys, ‘Montana: Stories of the Land,’ recognizes Indians’ continued presence – from long before Columbus landed in the New World and into the twenty-first century,” Kohl said. “It also pays tribute to the many later settlers who came from across the globe to make their homes here.”

The full-color book features more than 400 historical photographs, unique artifacts, maps and paintings largely drawn from the Society's collections, which Kohl said provides “a true visual treat” in addition to the colorful and well-written text.

Wherever possible, the book uses the voices of those who lived the Montana story as taken from oral histories, diaries, letters, newspaper accounts and other sources in the Society collection, Kohl said.

The book is written so that it can be used by students as well as enjoyed by the general public, and also is available in most book stores across the state.